

many of their plans. Everyone continues to be inspired by Gabby's recovery, by Mark's devotion, and by the courage it took for their family to re-enter public life and public service. But that is who Mark Kelly is—a devoted and honorable man—and we are delighted to welcome him to the Senate Democratic caucus and the wider Senate family.

So a fond adieu to my friend LAMAR, and a fond welcome to my new friend Mark Kelly.

I have some more remarks on the topics, but I think I will defer those, with unanimous consent that I could talk about those later, so we can get right to Senator ALEXANDER's remarks at the 10:30 scheduled time.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Kyle Hauptman, of Maine, to be a Member of the National Credit Union Administration Board for a term expiring August 2, 2025.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

FAREWELL TO THE SENATE

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank my friend Mitch, and I thank my friend Chuck for their remarks. I will have more to say to them later.

On March 9, 1967, Senator Howard H. Baker, Jr., the newly elected Senator from Tennessee, made his maiden address, his first speech on the floor of the U.S. Senate. He spoke for too long.

The Republican leader of the Senate, who was also Baker's father-in-law, Senator Everett M. Dirksen, walked over to congratulate him and then said, "Howard, occasionally, you might enjoy the luxury of an unexpressed thought," which is good advice for a farewell address as well.

As Senator Baker's legislative assistant, I was also his speech writer for that maiden address, or at least I thought I was. He had developed a bad habit of not saying what I wrote for his speech. So I asked to see him, and I said: Do we have a problem with our relationship?

He said: No, we have a perfect relationship. You write what you want to

write, and I will say what I want to say.

I learned a couple of other things about "saying what I want to say." One came from Alex Haley, the author of "Roots," who heard me speak once and called me aside afterward and said: May I make a suggestion? He said: If, when you begin a speech, you would start by saying, "Instead of making a speech, let me tell you a story," someone might actually listen to what you have to say.

And then, from David Broder, who gave this advice to Ruth Marcus when she got her column for the Washington Post: one idea per column.

So here is a story about my one idea for this speech.

In August of 1968, Senator Baker was in the Republican leader's office, where Senator McConnell is today. He overheard this conversation. Senator Dirksen was saying:

[No.] Mr. President, I cannot come down and have a drink with you tonight. I did that last night and Louella is very unhappy with me.

About 30 minutes later, there was a commotion out in the hall, and in the door of the Republican leader's office came two beagles, three Secret Service men, and the President of the United States. And Lyndon Johnson said to Everett Dirksen: "Everett, if you won't come down and have a drink with me, I'm here to have one with you." And they disappeared into the back room.

Later that same year, around a long table, in that same office, the Democratic President and the Republican leader worked out the Civil Rights Act of 1968. It took 67 votes to break a filibuster, but when the bill passed and Johnson signed it, the Senators who voted no went home and said: It is the law. We have to accept it.

And it still is today, along with many other civil rights laws.

So that is the one idea I have for this speech. Our country needs a U.S. Senate to work across party lines to force broad agreements on hard issues, creating laws that most of us have voted for and that a diverse country will accept.

In the 1930s, we needed a Senate to create Social Security; after World War II, the United Nations; in the 1960s, Medicare; in 1978, to ratify the Panama Canal Treaty; in 2013, more recently, to tie interest rates for student loans to the market rates, saving student borrowers hundreds of billions of dollars in the last several years; in 2015, to fix No Child Left Behind.

That bill had 100 alligators in the swamp. The Wall Street Journal said, when we finished, that it was the largest evolution of power from Washington to the States in 25 years. When President Obama signed it, he said it was "a Christmas miracle" because, in the end, 85 Senators voted for it. In 2016, as Senator McConnell mentioned, there was the 21st Century Cures Act, moving medical miracles faster to patients and into doctors' of-

fices. That bill ran off the track every 2 or 3 days. On one of those days, I called the Vice President, Joe Biden. I said: Joe, I am stuck in the White House. I have the President's personalized medicine in this. I have your Cancer MoonShot. Senator McConnell's regenerative medical proposal is in it. Speaker Ryan has worked out a way to pay for it. But I can't get the White House to move. I feel like the butler standing outside the Oval Office with a silver platter, and nobody will open the door and take the order.

And Joe Biden said: If you want to feel like the butler, try being Vice President.

Well, in the next few weeks, the Senate rules literally forced us to come to an agreement, and, in the end, we almost all voted for it. Senator McConnell said then, as he said today, it was "the most important legislation" of that Congress. And, today, it is helping to create vaccines and treatments in record time. Then, in 2018, there was a once-in-a-generation change in the copyright laws to help songwriters be fairly paid; this year, the Great American Outdoors Act. Everyone agrees that it is the most important outdoor and environmental bill in 50 years.

All of that took a long time, a lot of palaver, many amendments, many years. Too many years, civil rights advocates, students, patients, songwriters, and conservationists would say. But the point was that those bills didn't just pass. They passed by big margins. The country accepted them, and they are going to be there for a long time, and most of them were enacted during divided government, when the Presidency and at least one body of Congress was of different political parties.

That offers an opportunity to share the responsibility or the blame for doing hard things, like controlling the Federal debt. That is why our country needs a U.S. Senate, to thoughtfully and carefully and intentionally put country before partisanship and personal politics, to force broad agreements on controversial issues that become laws that most of us will vote for and that a diverse country will accept.

Nearly 60 years ago, I had traveled from my home in the mountains of Tennessee to New York University's Law School in Manhattan, on Washington Square. It was my first trip ever to New York City, and I had asked for a roommate whose background was as different from mine as possible. One of those roommates turned out to be a tall skinny guy from New Jersey. When I would go to his home in New Jersey and spend the night—his mother was a seamstress and his dad was a contractor; they were Italian immigrants—his mother would become so concerned about my frayed collar on my one white dress shirt that she would turn it while I slept.

Years later, that roommate, Paul Tagliabue, invited me to go to the Italian American Dinner here in Washington. They were bursting with pride

for the Italian-American heritage at that dinner: cheers for Scalia, the Justice, and for Pelosi, the Congressman, and for Stallone, the actor, and for Tagliabue, the National Football League Commissioner. But what struck me was, as proud as they all were of their Italian heritage, they were most proud to say: We are all Americans.

Ken Burns, whose films tell the story of who we are, reminds us that the late Arthur Schlesinger once wrote that our country needs less “*pluribus*” and more “*unum*,” and the fact that we have attracted people from everywhere in the world has made our country richer and stronger, but it is more important and a greater achievement that we have combined all of that diversity into one country. That is why the motto above the Presiding Officer’s desk is not one word—“*pluribus*.” It is “*e pluribus unum*”—out of many, one.

More than ever, our country needs a United States to turn “*pluribus*” into “*unum*,” to lead the American struggle to forge unity from diversity.

Now, some advocate operating the Senate in a different way: End the filibuster—the Senate’s best-known tradition. In the movie “*Mr. SMITH Goes to Washington*,” he calls it “the right to talk your head off.” They say: Don’t worry about party lines. Pass everything with a majority vote.

Presidents would like that. They have said so. They would get their way more easily if we allow the passions to roar through the Senate like they roar through the House of Representatives. So if the Democrats are in charge, we could abolish every right-to-work law, repeal all limits on abortion, and pass restrictions on guns. That is very appealing for the moment, but what about if the train roars in the other direction and Republicans say: Let’s impose a right-to-work law on every State and pro-life laws and gun rights laws.

Is such back and forth and back and forth what we really want as a country? The Framers didn’t think so. They created this cooling saucer for those passions that Washington talked about, and the filibuster—“the right to talk your head off”—is the preeminent tool we use to force broad agreements on tough issues that most of us will vote for and that the country could live with.

Alexis de Tocqueville, the remarkable young Frenchman who wandered through our country in 1831 and 1832 and who wrote the best book yet on democracy in America, saw two great dangers for our future: One, Russia; and, two, the tyranny of the majority.

Ending the filibuster will destroy the impetus for forcing the broad agreements I have been talking about, and it would unleash the tyranny of the majority to steamroll the rights of the minority.

Well, you may say that the Senate isn’t solving some big problems, and you would be right. We are not even voting on some big problems. Some-

times it is because the majority doesn’t bring it up, and sometimes the minority obstructs. If a carbon tax is a good idea, why aren’t we voting on it? Or if we want to help the DACA kids, why aren’t we voting on it? Or if the Federal debt is out of control, why aren’t we voting on it?

It doesn’t take a genius. It doesn’t take a genius to figure out how to gum up the works in a body of 100 that operates mostly by unanimous consent. But here is my different view of why we are here. It is hard to get here. It is hard to stay here. And while we are here, we might as well try to accomplish something good for the country. But it is hard to accomplish something if you don’t vote on amendments.

Lately, the Senate has been like joining the Grand Ole Opry and not being allowed to sing. It is a real waste of talent. Think about this body. Over the years, we have had astronauts, former Governors, Supreme Court law clerks, military heroes, turnaround CEOs. We even had one of us who ran the Olympics. A group of that much talent ought to accomplish a lot more, and you don’t have to eliminate the filibuster to accomplish a lot more—meaning, restore the Senate to a time when it was working across party lines more often to solve big problems.

Not so long ago, the Senate worked Monday through Friday, considered hundreds of amendments. Most votes were by majority, and conferences worked out broad agreements. That was under the existing rules. Let me say that again. That was under the existing rules. So the Senate doesn’t need a change of rules. It needs a change of behavior, and the behavior to change first is to stop blocking each other’s amendments. If you are against it, vote no. Why stop the entire body from even considering it? Why join the Grand Ole Opry if you don’t want to sing? I guarantee you that if 15 to 20 Democrats and 15 to 20 Republicans decided they wanted to change that practice, they could do it.

Some Governors don’t like being a U.S. Senator, but not me. The jobs are different. Both jobs cause you to want to see an urgent need, develop a strategy to deal with it, and then try to persuade at least half of the people that you are right. But the Governor’s job is more like Moses. You say: Let’s go this way. The Senator’s job, if you want to get something done, is more like a parade organizer. You pick the route, you recruit the marchers, you select the music, you even pick the drum majors sometimes, and then you march in the middle of the parade and hope it doesn’t run off the road more than a half dozen times on the way to where it is going.

I love the traditions of the Senate, the hard marble floors, the elaborate courtesies, Barry Black’s prayers, and scratching my name beside Howard Baker’s and Fred Thompson’s names in this desk drawer.

I have made a lot of friendships in the Senate. My best friendship began

at a softball game between Senator John G. Tower’s staff of Texas and Senator Baker’s staff, in the summer of 1967, when a 21-year-old Smith College graduate named Honey slid into first base wearing red shorts.

I was not only surprised but captivated, and 18 months later we were married. And for 52 years she has been an unselfish and caring wife, mother, campaigner, and advocate for families and children, especially her own.

In 1969, as the leader mentioned, Senator Baker said to me: You ought to get to know that smart, young legislative assistant for the new Kentucky Senator, Marlow Cook. That smart, young legislative assistant was MITCH MCCONNELL, and it began a half century of friendship.

Mario D’Angelo, in the barbershop here, first cut my hair in 1977 when I came up for 3 months to work with Senator Baker when he was suddenly elected Republican leader.

Some of my experiences in the Senate haven’t been so friendly, such as my confirmation hearing in 1991, when Senator Metzenbaum of Ohio said: Governor Alexander, I have heard some very disturbing things about you, but I don’t think I’ll bring them up here. And he then put a hold on my nomination for 2 months, until I was mysteriously confirmed late one night—and I still don’t know how.

Back then I found a new way to make friends among Senators when I went to the Republican retreat, and they said: If you will stop talking and play the piano, we will support Bush’s education program. So I did, and they did.

I have strengthened friendships in the so-called “inner sanctum” that CHUCK SCHUMER and I resurrected downstairs. It provides a private space for Senators to have a snack and a conversation.

One-third of this body, of the Senators and their spouses, have come to the Smoky Mountains to be guests of Honey and me in our home for the weekend. We don’t talk about politics much there. We talked about lost hikers and told bear stories.

And I have even learned here how to count—how to count my friends. In 2006 I wrote 27 thank-you notes for 24 votes when I lost the race by 1 vote to be the Republican whip. Having learned to count, I got to be the Republican conference chairman. I enjoyed that, but 9 years ago I left to focus on issues that I cared the most about. Since then I have done my best to leave footprints that I hope are good for the country: fixing No Child Left Behind and 21st Century Cures and simplifying FAFSA, working with PATTY MURRAY—MICHAEL BENNET was there at the start for the FAFSA; working with DIANNE FEINSTEIN in building up our National Laboratories and supercomputing; joining the bipartisan parade of Portland and WARNER and GARDNER and KING and MANCHIN and DAINES and HEINRICH and BURR and CANTWELL that created the Great American Outdoors Act; the law

to help songwriters; working with MURRAY and JONES and TIM SCOTT on permanently funding Black colleges; with BLUNT and SHELBY on the shark tank of the National Institutes of Health, creating new diagnostic tests, new ways; with BURR and DURBIN and MANCHIN and KING on the student loan law I mentioned; with CASEY and ENZI on the Perkins Act; with Harry Reid and Bill Frist, when they were leaders, on the America COMPETES Act.

None of this could have been done without an exceptional staff. But instead of thanking them in a rushed way now, I am going to make a separate “salute to the staff” speech tomorrow. Maybe I will start a tradition.

My favorite time in the U.S. Senate has been with the American history teachers whom I invite to come to the Senate floor before it opens while they are attending the academies that were created by the legislation I introduced in my maiden address 18 years ago.

After that address, Ted Kennedy, without my knowing it, went around and got 20 Democratic cosponsors. In the House, ROGER WICKER and MARSHA BLACKBURN helped pass the bill there, where they were then.

The teachers who come to the floor before we open invariably go to our desks. They try to find Daniel Webster’s desk. They look for the Kennedy brothers’ desk. They ask, “Where is Jefferson Davis’s desk?”—Jefferson Davis, who resigned the Senate to become President of the Confederacy—because they have heard the story that there is a chop mark on the desk that was imposed by a Union soldier when they captured Washington. The soldier was chopping the desk until his commander said: Stop that. We are here to save the Union, not to destroy it.

Invariably a teacher will ask: Senator, what would you like for us to take back to our students about being a U.S. Senator?

My reply is always the same: Please suggest to your students that they look at Washington, DC, as if it were a split-screen television. On one side are the confirmation hearings and the tweets, and on the other side you have Democratic and Republican Senators working together to strengthen national defense, National Laboratories, national parks, and the National Institutes of Health.

Please remind them of what a remarkable country this is: the strongest military, the best universities, producing 20 percent of all the money in the world for just 4 percent of the people. Tell them we are not perfect, but, as our Constitution says, we are always working to form a more perfect union and that, as Samuel Huntington wrote, most of our arguments are about conflicts among principles with which most of us agree, and most of our politics is about disappointments in not being able to reach the noble goals we set for ourselves, such as all men are created equal.

The late NAACP President Ben Hooks used to teach his University of

Memphis students, “America is a work in progress. We’ve come a long way, and we have a long way to go.”

Please remind your students that the rest of the world wishes they had our system of government and that the U.S. Senate has been and I hope continues to be the single most important institution that helps to unify our country by creating broad agreements that most of us can vote for and that the citizens of the United States will accept.

Finally, please tell them that I wake up every day thinking I might be able to do something good to help our country and that I go to bed most nights thinking that I have. Please tell them that it is a great privilege to be a U.S. Senator.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

TRIBUTE TO LAMAR ALEXANDER

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, it is such an honor to be here and to join my colleagues in paying tribute to Senator ALEXANDER today. As you can see, there are many who want to speak and have a few words to say.

Now, I think all of us wish that we could do this to a background of music with LAMAR playing the piano. That would definitely be the proper setting. But I am so pleased to stand and to honor the three terms of service that he has had here in this body and the way he has touched the lives not only of individuals in this body but millions of Tennesseans.

We know that he has—and he has talked about it in his remarks—worked with educators; he has worked with innovators; he has worked with the healthcare community; and he has worked, yes, with entertainers, many of whom hold him so dear and who call Tennessee home. In fact, when I was serving in the House and representing Tennessee’s 7th Congressional District, so many times I would look over here and I would think “What is LAMAR not working on today?” because he always had such a broad portfolio of issues that were demanding his attention. And what we know is he accepted that work to address that broad portfolio of issues.

His commitment for caring for the needs of all Tennesseans has really manifested itself in what Tennesseans like to see as a lifelong legacy that has really changed lives. As Governor, he worked to streamline our State’s government, was very successful in those efforts, and he brought that desire to streamline government with him when he came to the Senate. Indeed, this is work that has benefited all Tennesseans and all Americans.

As Governor of Tennessee, he was very successful in working to persuade Nissan automotive to come into our State. This started a new impact on our State with the auto industry. Then, as the auto industry needed suppliers, he turned his attention to infrastructure to make certain that the

roads, the highways, the access that were necessary were there to encourage this business.

As the former Secretary of Education under President George H. W. Bush, he couldn’t not put his personal touch on education policy, working tirelessly, as he said, to fix No Child Left Behind. This earned him the first-ever James Madison Award.

He has a reputation for, indeed, being a go-to lawmaker, and as chairman of HELP here in the Senate, he put a spotlight on the issues that affect the most sensitive aspects of Tennesseans’ lives, again benefiting all Americans.

I like the fact that he talked about bipartisanship and productivity. Between 2015 and 2019, during his term of service at HELP, he has reported 45 bills out of his committee that have become law—45 bills. As he mentioned, one of those was 21st Century Cures. As a Member in the House and working on originating this bill, we had said: We are going to make this bipartisan. And, indeed, we did, and we moved it from the House to the Senate. And yes, indeed, there were some days we thought: This is never going to happen. But, indeed, Senator ALEXANDER insisted, and, yes, it did happen.

He mentioned the Music Modernization Act, and I will tell you, this is vitally important to Tennesseans. As we worked this through the House and then it hit some bumps in the road, Senator ALEXANDER and Senator Hatch did such a great job of pushing this forward here in the Senate.

Then, last September, the Nashville Songwriters Association International awarded him the White Hat Award, which is what they give to legislators who have made a significant impact on the entertainment and music community.

Well, the highlight reel would be too long to cover in one speech. There are many who are waiting to express their thanks.

So, with that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). The Senator from California is recognized.

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Senator LAMAR ALEXANDER, a friend and a colleague who has served in this body for some 18 years now. I have had the pleasure of serving with this Senator on both the Rules Committee and the Appropriations Committee, and we sat next to each other as chairman or ranking member on two Appropriations subcommittees—first Interior and then Energy and Water. We have done that since 2009. It has been through these experiences that I truly have come to appreciate Senator ALEXANDER’s fairness, his interest in solving problems, and his bipartisanship.

Most of all, I so appreciate your friendship and the time we have had to talk together.

I do believe that the Senate is going to be diminished by the absence of this Senator.